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## "THE AMERICAN PIONEER."

### AN ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE THE ARIZONA PIONEER SOCIETY, AT PRESCOTT, JULY 4, 1866,

BY GOVERNOR RICHARD C. McCORMICK.

*Gentlemen*—I presume the honor of delivering the first formal address before this society is accorded to me from my official station, and by your partial courtesy, rather than because of my claims as a pioneer, for while I came to this central part of Arizona in the first year of its occupancy by the whites, (1863) there are those who had then resided in the Territory for years, and who are more familiar with its history.

A principal purpose of this society, as stated in the preamble to the constitution and bylaws, will be to preserve a faithful record of the labors, the sacrifices and the virtues of these first settlers, and those who have passed away, and it is well thus promptly to begin this pleasing and dutiful work. The history of a country, as it is well expressed in the aforesaid preamble, derives its truthfulness and interest from a record of the acts of its pioneers. "Posterity," said John Quincy Adams, "delights in details," and we cannot better please those who are to come after us in the occupation of this country, when it shall have grown to stately proportions, than by handing down to them, through this organization, a clear and accurate register of all that pertains to its early settlement and growth.

The pioneer, according to the standard dictionaries, is "one who goes before to remove obstructions or prepare the way for others." His work is a most important one, requiring the exercise of the best traits of character, and in all ages and lands he has held a prominent and reputable position, although seldom one of ease or of profit. It would be an interesting and remunerative study carefully to consider the influence which his movements have wrought upon the world's destiny, how they have precipitated human events, and what priceless yet peaceful victories they have won. But the theme is too momentous for an ordinary pen or an occasion like the present. To treat of the pioneer as meant by this organization, the American explorer, the pathfinder in the new world, the forerunner in the Rocky Mountains and upon the Pacific slope, the prospector in the great mineral regions, is indeed more than the hour will permit, and I will be content, as I trust you will be, with what may be termed an allusion to, rather than a discussion of, a topic so eminently suggestive, interesting and important.

The American Republic, if not the pioneer republic of the world, is confessedly the first conceived in true liberty, and the first to survive the rudest shocks of foreign assault and domestic discord, and to gain strength with years and suffering. Tried in the fire it has come forth as fine gold.

Aided by the stimulating influence of its free and encouraging institutions, the march of the American pathfinder from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains, and from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific, has been rapid and irresistible, overcoming every physical difficulty and danger, opening to peaceful settlement and development and dedicating to freedom an area greater than that of all Europe, and creating a leading power among the nations of the earth, the sum of whose splendid deeds no language can describe.

"Eagles," said Sidney, "fly alone; they are but sheep which always herd together." The spirit of adventure is characteristic of the American. Like the eagle he delights to move alone, to lead rather than to follow, and old and familiar paths are less to his liking than new and untried ways. If there is danger ahead it adds to its charm, and privation and suffering but stimulate him in his pursuits.

Self-reliance is his foremost trait, and to it his remarkable achievements are mainly to be accredited.

"That they can conquer who believe they can."

Acting on the theory that Heaven helps those who help themselves, he strikes boldly where none have gone before, and his enterprise makes the wilderness and solitary place glad, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.

Earnestness is a kindred and all important element in his character, and a chief aid to his success. "Even the tenderest of men," wrote Thoreau, "force their way up through the hardest earth and the crevices of rocks; but a man no material power can resist. What a wedge, what a beetle, what a catapult is an earnest man! What can resist him?"

Exploration west of the Mississippi was first with a view to trapping. The great fur companies offered employment to hundreds of men, who penetrated further and further with every year, and eventually becoming enamored of rude life preferred the wilderness to the settlements.

To the fearlessness, the endurance and the exploits of these men are we indebted for the rapid opening and occupation of the Rocky Mountain region. Could their individual histories be written with minutiæ of detail, what an addition to the annals of human adventure and triumph would we have. In hunting the beaver and bear, the lynx and the fox, the deer and the buffalo, step by step they ascended and descended the rivers, scaled the mountains, traversed the plains, and amazed the red man by their audacious encroachments upon his domains. What libraries of light literature have been based upon the romantic incidents of frontier life, and especially upon the struggles with the Indian, which to this day continue, although he has been driven from point to point before the irresistible march of the white man, until civilization occupies the greater part of his hunting grounds, and it is written in the book of destiny that the day of his utter extinction is near at hand.

As the great discoverer of the continent was deprived the reasonable and just right of giving his name to it, so the pioneers who have penetrated that continent and given it to civilization, even from ocean to ocean, have many of them gone without a proper recognition of their important services.

Jedediah S. Smith, a chief trader in the employ of the American Fur Company, is conceded to have been the first American who went overland from the Atlantic States to California (in 1826) and yet how few are there who have even heard his name. What daring did he exhibit, with what perils must he have been surrounded, what faith, hope and persistence did he display, but he has no place in history.

James W. Marshall, the acknowledged discoverer of gold in California (although it is asserted that Smith reported its existence,) lives in comparative obscurity, and without wealth, in that State, and is scarcely known to fame.

James Finney located the first claim on perhaps the most famous silver deposit in America, and yet it bears the name of Comstock, the man who when it began to attract attention was employed to purchase it.

Carson, Maxwell and Bill Williams were experienced explorers when Fremont first met them, and without their aid as guides it is doubtful whether he would have had success in his various expeditions, yet where history has a word for them it has volumes in praise of Fremont.

Walker and Weaver had crossed and recrossed the continent, trapped on every stream, bartered and fought with every tribe of Indians, and imperilled their lives an hundred times, before Fremont had left the Charleston College, or thought of becoming a pathfinder—and yet they have little renown.

Weaver ascended and descended the Gila, the Colorado and their tributaries, and ransacked what now constitutes the Territory of Arizona, full thirty-five years ago, and there are unpretending men before me to-day, numbers of them, an unexaggerated record of whose services as pioneers would give new confirmation to the axiom that "truth is stranger than fiction," and prove them far better entitled to the credit of opening the Rocky Mountains and Pacific country than the romancing heroes who lay claim to public gratitude on that score.

The real pioneer is seldom a man of words or a seeker for notoriety. He thinks "brave actions never need a trumpet," and it is with difficulty that he can be induced to dwell upon his adventures. I have for several years been anxious to obtain from our own most noted pioneers, Walker and Weaver, the story of their eventful lives, and although I am satisfied that few explorers have an experience so rich in interesting incident and valuable observation, or one more worthy of public preservation, I have from their reluctance to speak of themselves to this time succeeded in obtaining only the merest outline of the same.

Cortez is reported to have said that gold was a specific remedy for the disease of the heart, with which his countrymen, the Spaniards, were sorely afflicted. Eagerness for wealth is a passion with the American pioneer. The discovery of gold in California appealed directly to this passion. Whole communities were speedily transplanted from the Atlantic to the Pacific. A great State sprang up in a day, and new life beamed upon the whole Pacific country. The discovery, in the language of another, "stands out as a prominent headland on the shores of time, unequalled as a practical event, so far as extent and rapidity of development are concerned."

The Missouri and the Arkansas were no longer considered the frontier, no line east of the placid Pacific would satisfy the gold loving American, nor was he content to confine his explorations to California; from the British to the Mexican possessions, the whole wild country must be examined, no matter what the risk or how great the privation.

The life of the American mining pioneer is of a kind peculiar to itself. The circumstances which have produced it have existed no where else. In all other countries the mineral districts have been comparatively limited in extent, monopolized by government, or slow in development. Here they are unbounded and open to all, while in less than a score of years, they have been made to yield an amount of the precious metals sufficient to revolutionize the monetary relations of the world.

At least an hundred thousand men have for the last fifteen years devoted themselves exclusively to mining explorations upon the Pacific slope. All they ask and all they expect to receive is a lode when they find it, and the injustice of any policy that would deprive them of the reward of long years of industry, privation and sacrifice could only be surpassed by the ruinous consequences of its stupidity. It is estimated by a good authority* that "unless absolute madness should rule the hour, and great outrages be committed by Government upon the mining industry of the country, of which there ought to be no fear, the time is not far distant when the product of the American mines will reach the enormous sum of five hundred millions per annum." The same authority remarks that "it would be better policy for the Government to offer a bounty for the discovery of a silver or gold lode, than to tax the possessor or dispute his title"; a sentiment in which I heartily concur.

The results to this time have abundantly proven the wisdom of the liberal policy of the Government. Under it prodigious progress has been made in discovering the vast mineral wealth of the continent, compared with which that of all other continents is insignificant;—and an army of hardy freemen, volunteer laborers in exploration whom no money could hire, has grown up and given to the American people world wide renown, as conquerors in new and difficult fields of peaceful enterprise.

The American mining pioneer is a character that will bear examination. Physically no man is his equal. A dweller out of doors.

"A forester and breather
Of the steep mountain tops,"

A constant traveller, his exercise in the open air gives him a fine muscular development, great strength of wind and limb, a vigorous appetite, and a relish for the plainest food. What he would deem unpalatable in the East is hear a pleasing meal. The toughest meat, coffee plain, beans and slap-jacks, these are better dishes to him than those prepared by the most expert of French or Italian cooks. Nor is he particular about his table furniture, if indeed he has a table. A tin plate for his meat, a tin cup for his coffee, a tin pan for his beans, a hunting knife and a tin spoon compose his kit, and serve him acceptably. The earth is his bed, his saddle his pillow, and a blanket his covering, and he sleeps more soundly and sweetly than he would on the softest of couches. The personal appearance of no other man is so generally deceptive. Removed from the marts of trade, and freed from the restraints of society, with an eye to comfort and his business, rather than to fashion or show, he dresses with the utmost simplicity, often in imitation of the red man in the skins of beasts of his own hunting. When on Sundays and holidays he comes from the mountains to the towns out of respect to the occasion, and the remembrance of "other days," he appears in a "boiled shirt" and polished boots, but he cannot disguise his discomfort, is ill at ease, and on the morrow returns to his old clothes with immense relief. To the votaries of the desk, the pampered sons of luxury, the slaves of fashion in the East, the chequered life of the bronzed pioneer seems one of intolerable hardship and vicissitude, and yet what would they not give—the shattered victims of city life, the dyspeptic, the rheumatic, the neuralgic and the gouty—for his keen appetite and robust health.

His character, like the lodes of precious quartz, has its dips and spurs, and is often very angular, and, as owing to the composition of the rock, varied processes are necessary to gather the gold, so he must be sifted according to his peculiar nature. Croppings and float rock, or the outward man, are not enough to judge him by. He must be tunnelled, shafted and carefully worked, if you would comprehend him fully. Now upon acquaintance he proves to be free gold, easily read and understood; anon he is disguised in sulphurets, but properly desulphurized he is rich in fine traits, and seldom by any test does he fail to show the color of a good man and a good citizen.

Indeed the life of the mining pioneer wild and secluded as it is, and animated by a love of gain, cannot from its constant communion with

"Nature's self, which is the breath of God,
Or His pure word by miracle revealed,"

be without elevating moral and intellectual tendencies. Wordsworth says there is no littleness in the mountains. Nothing, certainly, is more out of place, or generally despised upon the frontier. A mean man, a man of small notions, is never a true pioneer. He may by force of circumstances be among the first to occupy a new country, but his sordid and contracted nature is at war with everything around him, and he is ever uncomfortable and usually unsuccessful, as he deserves to be. The great hearted, impulsive fellow, who long absent from home and kindred, depressed by ill luck or excited by good fortune, occasionally gives way to an appetite for gaming or for drink, is considered less offensive, and a better citizen, than the niggardly, hide-bound Shylock, who haggles over a penny, and whose life study is to take advantage of those with whom he deals, and to promote his own private interests regardless of everything besides. The former, the victim of passion, is now and then false to himself and to society, the latter is habitually treacherous to the first principle of genuine manhood. "A man of right spirit," said Jonathan Edwards, "is not a man of narrow and private views, but is greatly interested and concerned for the good of the community to which he belongs, and particularly of the city or village in which he resides, and for the true welfare of the society of which he is a member."

*Senator Stewart, of Nevada.

While the true pioneer is never narrow in his views or dealings, he also never gives way to croaking. That he leaves to the raven and the frog. The harder the fare, the darker the hour, the more repelling the obstacles with which he has to contend, the more indomitable and cheerful is his spirit. Antæus like he gains strength through prostration. To him "the greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time he falls." Your hopeless, irresolute, despondent men, without ballast, who falling fail to rise, who because they personally, from their own shortcomings, are unsuccessful, condemn the country and everything in it, have no business upon the frontier. "Where there is no hope," said Dr. Johnson, "there is no endeavor."

Equally repulsive to the broad and charitable spirit of the true pioneer are the petty and contemptible ways of the slanderer, the backbiter, the scandal-monger, the parasite and the gossip. In every new community much depends upon mutual confidence. A respect for the rights and feelings of others will establish and preserve order where there is no law. He who by word or deed creates distrust, unsettles or agitates the popular mind, or encourages dispute, division or suspicion, exercises a most pernicious influence. The true pioneer, realizing, in a fresh and expansive country like this, the abundance for all, has no jealousies, and is staunch in his demands for equal justice. He would sooner go hungry and leave the country a pauper than disparage, or trespass upon, the property or rights of others. His manliness leads him to despise all arrogance or unfairness, and his native shrewdness tells him that to interfere with what belongs to others is to invite interference with what he himself may claim, and thus to disturb the general harmony of society. "The surest sign of a noble disposition is to have no envy in ones nature."

The Arizona pioneers came to the country, as did Cortez to the halls of the Montezumas, for gold, and not to work like a peasant, but no part of the continent has been so difficult to occupy and hold, and where one has, to this time, accumulated wealth, an hundred have toiled like the peasant and given fresh proof that while no pursuit is more fascinating than that of digging riches from the earth, none is more precarious or laborious.

Remotely situated; away from the usual lines of overland travel; with but one navigable river; producing but little food; with few placers and fewer streams for working them; prolific in deserts, and uninhabitable localities; infested by the most inhuman savages, and neglected by the government, the reputed wealth of Arizona in gold and silver has not to this day been a sufficient inducement to tempt a large population. Prospectors and explorers who have faced the physical difficulties of other, and much inferior, mineral territories, have been slow to venture here, and the men through whose extraordinary resolution, endurance and patience, we now have a firm foothold in the country, are in my judgment, as I think they will be in that of impartial history, of the hardiest and noblest class of American pioneers.

The annals of human adventure and pertinacity tell of no bolder movements or greater sacrifices than have here been made. The lonely mesas and canons give quiet and unnoted sepulture to hundreds of heroic men, who have fallen a prey to the Apache or perished from exhaustion, but as they fell others seized the standard of progress and civilization from their hands and bore it forward, and the good fruits of their intrepid enterprise are now shown in the advanced and promising state of the Territory.

The Apache, although still an annoyance and likely to be until the Government pursues him as the hound pursues the hare, is circumscribed in his range; roads from the Colorado of the West, and the Rio Grande penetrate this great interior region, which three short years since was designated on the maps as "unexplored"; busy mechanics and traders fill this thrifty town, where the first house was built but two years since; woman's cheering smile and influence are here; society is rapidly forming, and the horn spoon and the arrastra are giving way to stamps and crushers, whose profitable music will make the mountains more enchanting to the miner than ever by demonstrating their substantial and inexhaustible wealth.

I rejoice that after braving delays, disappointments and dangers, such as the pioneers of no other part of the continent have had to contend with, and to which ordinary men, even lusting for gold, would have succumbed, the miners of Arizona are at last apparently near the goal of their highest ambition; no pecuniary reward, not even the riches of Crœsus, can in my judgment, be beyond what they well deserve. I sincerely hope that in reverse of the too common result, in other mineral countries, and the frequent prediction here, they who have borne the heat and burthen of the day, the explorers of the Territory, the discoverers of the lodes, will reap the benefit of its development and prosperity, rather than the eleventh hour comers, or the cautious capitalists of the great cities, who make investments only when they know there is no longer any risk to encounter, and then demand the lion's share of all the pioneer has found.

Capital is of course needful to the working of mines, and no-where more so than in this remote country, but now that the merit of the quartz is known, the miner should not part with his interests for a trifle. It were madness in a pecuniary sense to sell what may, and probably will, within a few months command five or ten times the sum now offered, and if my voice could reach the ear of every lode owner in the Territory, I would say to him "make haste slowly, you have waited long, do not throw away the fruits of your patient toil, be generous to capital, but see to it that capital is generous to you." How numerous are the instances in the history of quartz mining in California, Nevada and Colorado, where after protracted and perilous effort, at the very dawn of triumph, men have abandoned the field, leaving a ready harvest to their fortunate successors. Let it not be so here; let the men who have crossed and recrossed the burning deserts; who have climbed the precipitous mountains; who have battled the malicious savage; who have lived homeless, homeless, almost breadless, for the coming of a good time, be content "to wait a little longer." Suppose it should be one, two, three, or even five years, before they are able to realize their greatest expectations, if the mines are what we believe they are, if they pay nearly as well as is expected, affluence and all that follows in its train will be gained in a much shorter time by remaining here than by going anywhere else.

I congratulate you, gentlemen, I congratulate the people of Arizona, aggregated from every state in the Union, a mixed but well harmonized population, ever fearless, earnest, generous and hopeful, not only that the prospects of the Territory are more flattering than ever before, but that the Republic, so dear to every patriot heart, whose life is our life, whose progress is our progress, whose strength is our strength, has emerged from the cloud of civil war, and is clothed with new and superior dignity; that freedom, equality, justice, are a living, indestructible, irresistible power on the face of the earth.

The day on which we meet, ever dear to the American pioneer, seems doubly glorious, as we contemplate the return of national unity and peace. Disguise it as we may, war is at best a terrible expedient.

"A fearful thing o'en in a righteous cause,"

and yet there is danger from the excitement which has swept over the land, and the prominence given to the sword, that the value of peace may be underrated. The old flag which we to-day salute with fresh honors, was made our pride through the achievements of long years of peace, and is now newly glorious, not by the flow of fraternal blood, but because that flow has ceased, not by a division of the Union, but by its preservation with increased liberty.

The pioneer is seldom a politician. With the cunning arts of policy he has little sympathy, while demagogism is his abhorrence. As a true patriot, however, he has an interest in the welfare of his country, and his views of public matters are broad and generous. To others he allows the widest liberty of opinion and action, consistent with an honorable fidelity to the laws; and he condemns no man for not thinking as he thinks. Knowing that

"Peace is the happy, natural state of man,"

and that the highest material development of the country cannot be attained while public affairs are unsettled, he will at this time applaud every effort to hasten the restoration of the practical and constitutional relations between all the States and the Federal Government.

Reconstruction upon an imperishable basis is the duty of the hour, and no one who sincerely desires that the perturbations of civil war shall speedily subside, and the nation be again organized in harmony, will obstruct it for a single moment. The conflict of arms has ceased: the conflict of passions, which led to that of arms, should cease also. If the people, rather than the politicians, have their way the work of reconstruction, with ample security for the personal liberty of all, will not be delayed, and the prosperity and power of the future of the Republic will far exceed that of the past.

Three thousand millions of dollars were spent during the war, and yet the country is richer than ever. A New York journal of a recent date notes as "the most remarkable of the age, the report from the Congressional Committee on Ways and Means, barely a year after the close of the most costly, desperate war ever known to history, of a bill reducing the rates of internal taxation an average of fully one-fifth."

The recuperative powers of the country are wonderful indeed; and the declaration of Lincoln on the day preceding his death, that we shall prove in a very few years that we are the treasury of the world, is not disputed even in the intensly anti-republican circles of Europe.

While the progress of the pioneer upon the Pacific slope was not absolutely retarded by the war; and it will ever be a glory of the Republic, that in the heat of the contest, new Territories and States were here organized, and peacefully and prosperously controlled; the restoration of public tranquility and the increased stability of free institutions, will give a new stimulus to pioneer enterprise, and must prove greatly advantageous to our immediate public and private interests.

While the war was raging, popular feeling here, although widely divided, and at times heated, was restrained, and peace maintained where it had been predicted there could be no peace.

Now, "when the war drum throbs no longer, and the battle flags are furled,"—when there is no cause for an agitating public question, every sectional and political difference should be buried, in a common and determined effort to make this rich Territory worthy a name and influence in the enfranchised Republic. If its resources are such as we believe them to be, the day is not distant when it will be occupied by a large and thriving population—when the iron horse will prance through its hills, and over its plains; and the lightning afford instant communication with all parts of the continent. Capital and labor will assert their potent sway; art will vie with nature in providing attractive homes, and luxury will take the place of want.

We are here, as those who may join us will be, to acquire pecuniary independence, to get gain, to hoard wealth, and we may well be pleased with the prospect before us. But to give full effect to the work of the pioneer we must look beyond gold and self, to the highest interests of the commonwealth. As good citizens it is our duty to see that law and order keep pace with the material development of the country; that society is carefully organized; that justice is upheld, that virtue is respected, and that truth, freedom and patriotism prevail. In no other way can we so well honor the memory of the men who have yielded their lives in wresting this broad region from the hands of the barbarian, or do justice to the pioneers who survive and watch, with unfeigned pride, the growth and success of the country of their choice.

To prepare the Territory for the assumption of the increased and grave responsibilities which will come with an increase of population and of wealth, and an admission to the sisterhood of sovereign States, a wholesome and elevated public sentiment must be maintained through the exercise of the nobler traits of our individual natures, which "make a man more precious than fine gold, even the golden wedge of Ophir," and the influence of which, through the gentle channels of peaceful and virtuous life gives "safety, strength and glory to a people," and constitutes the real greatness of a state.

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WHAT THE WAR COST US.—In 1836 the national debt did not exceed one million dollars. At the close of the war of 1812 it had reached the sum of $127,000,000. In 1861 the debt was $90,000,000, and continued to increase with geometrical progression, amounting July 1st, 1862, to $514,000,000; in July, 1863, to $1,098,792,181—in July, 1864, to $1,740,690,000, and at the close of the war it had reached the enormous sum of $2,682,593,026. Add to this the receipts from different sources during the time, and we find the actual war expenditures, up to July, 1865, were just $3,293,206,600 86. Large sums have been expended since that date, which will make the cost to the government in round numbers for suppressing the rebellion, $3,500,000,000. If we add to this sum the expenditures of the States, also of municipal cities and towns, the receipts of the Sanitary Commission, and the bounties paid by individuals, it would at a low estimate increase the actual cost of the war on one side, to the round sum of about $4,500,000,000 dollars, or $125,000 hourly, for the period of four years. Add to this the loss and destruction of property, and the figures will be nearly doubled. To this we must add the greater loss of a half a million precious lives, which time cannot restore. Will the historian tell us what other nation ever made such sacrifices to maintain its nationality? It shows the power and resources of the infant Republic so clearly as to inspire other nations with admiration and respect.—*Flag.*

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On the 28th of April a torpedo, which had been sunk for three years and one month in Charleston harbor, exploded off the beach of Sullivan's Island, near battery "B," in about eight fathoms of water. It is supposed to have been exploded by the dragging of a vessels cable. It lifted an immense volume of water, and presented quite a grand appearance.

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A SOUTHERN journal contains the following advertisement: "Wanted, at this office, a journeyman printer—one who can do press and job work, believes in the existence of a God, and don't drink whisky. To such a man steady employment and good wages will be paid."